



Tanya Lane
Town Manager

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

131 CEDAR STREET
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06111

MAYOR ROY ZARTARIAN

MINUTES

NEWINGTON TOWN COUNCIL
L101 – Lower Level
7:00 P.M.

September 27, 2016

Mayor Zartarian called the meeting to order at 6:55 p.m.

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. ROLL CALL

Councilor Anest
Councilor Budrejko
Councilor DelBuono
Councilor Klett
Councilor Manke
Councilor Marocchini
Councilor Nagel
Councilor Serra
Mayor Zartarian

Staff Attendees:

Tanya Lane, Town Manager
Dr. Collins, Superintendent of Schools
Steve Juda, Town Assessor
Lou Jachimowicz, Chief Finance and Operations Officer
Jaime Trevethan, Asst. to the Town Manager – Administration
Linda Irish-Simpson, Clerk of the Council

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilor Budrejko moved to accept the agenda and the motion was seconded by Councilor Serra. The motion passed 9 – 0.

IV. AWARDS/PROCLAMATIONS

A. Steve Juda – Retirement

Councilor DelBuono moved the following:

WHEREAS, S. Steven Juda was appointed to the position of Assessor for the Town of Newington on July 6, 2004; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Juda came to Newington in 2004 with over thirty years of assessment experience, having previously served as the Assessor for the Town of Windsor and City of New Haven as well as the Senior Real Estate Appraiser and Director of Real Estate Market Research for Shawmut/Fleet Bank; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Juda holds a Bachelors Degree from Southern New Hampshire College and a Masters of Business Administration from Western New England College; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure in Newington, Mr. Juda oversaw three revaluations, numerous assessment appeals; two computer-assisted mass appraisal software system changes and served countless residents with professionalism, honesty and kindness; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure in Newington, Mr. Juda was instrumental in establishing the Local Elderly Tax Relief program and special assessments for the Indian Hill Country Club, New Meadow Elderly Housing and Aero-Craft, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Juda has long been an advocate for property tax reform and was featured in the December 24, 2014 Connecticut Magazine Article “Love Target’s Prices? How About Big Box Stores’ Property Tax Appeals?”; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Juda has been recognized by his peers as one of the State’s most respected Assessors, has served as an instructor for the Connecticut Association of Assessing Officers and was honored with the Distinguished Service Award and Assessor of the Year; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Juda has announced his intention to retire from the Town of Newington effective October 7, 2016;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Newington Town Council hereby recognizes and extends its sincere appreciation to Mr. S. Steven Juda for his 12 years of exemplary service to the Town of Newington; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby wishes Mr. Juda many fruitful years of health and happiness to enjoy with his wife Pat, children and grandchildren, many successful rounds of golf and safe travels in his retirement.

Councilor Budrejko seconded the motion. The motion passed 9 – 0.

Mr. Juda expressed his thanks to everyone and said he had enjoyed his years in Newington. He liked the people he came in contact with and felt the Town was a great one.

Ron Mortenson, 53 Meadowview: He said Mr. Juda had solved any problem a resident came to him with and had never heard a complaint about Mr. Juda from any resident. He congratulated him on his retirement.

John Bachand, 56 Maple Hill Avenue: He stated Mr. Juda’s department was incredible and thanked him for all his efforts.

Ann Harter, 72 Centerwood Road: She said it had been a pleasure working with Mr. Juda and made her job much easier. She wished him the best and said he would be missed.

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive: She had worked with Mr. Juda and his staff when she was working for the State. It was wonderful working with him and his department and was sorry he was leaving. Mrs. Lyons wished him well and hoped he had a wonderful retirement.

Councilor DelBuono thanked him for his service and said it was amazing to work with him. She wished him a good retirement.

Councilor Marocchini thanked him for his service and said he had never met anyone who could make assessments and taxes exciting.

Councilor Manke thanked him for the job he did which could be thankless at times. He hoped he enjoyed retirement and had safe travels.

Councilor Nagel agreed with the other councilors' comments and thanked him for his service to Newington.

Mayor Zartarian said it had been a pleasure working with him over the years and hoped he had a wonderful retirement.

B. Newington Student Assistance Fund 50th Anniversary

Councilor Manke moved the following:

WHEREAS, the Newington Student Assistance Fund, Inc. was created 50 years ago in 1966; and

WHEREAS, the Newington Student Assistance Fund is a non-profit organization whose sole purpose is to raise money for assisting Newington students in obtaining post-secondary education or training; and

WHEREAS, the Newington Student Assistance Fund, since its inception, has provided over \$1 million dollars of financial assistance in interest-free repayable loans to over 1,100 Newington students; and

Whereas, the Newington Student Assistance Fund has run a number of community events, including dances, book awards, camp fairs and an art auction to raise money for these loans; plus an annual mail campaign; and

Whereas, the Newington Student Assistance Fund celebrated its 50th Anniversary by holding a Wine and Craft Beer Tasting on September 23, 2016;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Newington Town Council hereby recognizes these numerous contributions to the citizens of Newington and extends its sincere thanks and appreciation to the Newington Student Assistance Fund.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Newington Town Council hereby proclaims the week of September 26, 2016 as Newington Student Assistance Fund Week and directs the Clerk of the Council to spread this resolution upon the minutes of this meeting and to provide a suitable copy for presentation.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Anest and passed 9 – 0.

Mr. Sullivan thanked everyone for the proclamation. He thanked everyone for their support at their latest fundraiser which would help them continue their mission of making interest free loans to students. They were proud to be able to do it over 50 years and hoped it would continue.

Mayor Zartarian congratulated the organization and said he had had a good time at the Wine and Beer Tasting event. He said they did a wonderful job for the students in Newington.

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive: She thanked the Newington Public Assistance Fund for helping her daughter with a loan and felt they were a great organization. Regarding Alumni Road she said a light was needed at Alumni Road and hoped there was a designation if the road was not opened that stated “no outlet.” She felt it was a safety concern. She was thankful for the change of signs at the auditorium that no longer read “Council Chambers.”

John Bachand, 56 Maple Hill: He was in support of the Alumni Road project and felt that something had to be done at that location. Mr. Bachand indicated he was pleased with the direction the renovation committee had taken and the chairman was a good fit for the committee.

VI. REMARKS BY COUNCILORS ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

VII. CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS (Action May Be Taken)

A. Bid Waiver – Fire Apparatus Engine 1

Councilor Nagel moved the following:

WHEREAS, the Town Council has the power under Section 814 of the Newington Charter to waive the process of procuring sealed bids; and

WHEREAS, Town personnel have determined that Pierce Manufacturing makes fire apparatus that best suits the needs of the Town in price, quality of materials and standardization with other fire apparatus within the Town’s fleet,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council grants a waiver, as requested by the Board of Fire Commissioners, for the requirement of sealed bids for a fire apparatus to replace the existing Engine 1; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the bid waiver to Pierce Manufacturing, is granted subject to a final negotiated price between Pierce Manufacturing and the Town.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Marocchini and the motion passed 9 – 0.

B. Ordinance Amendment: Chapter 182, Blighted Premises Code

Mayor Zartarian indicated it had been continued from the previous meeting due to some questions the councilors had at the time. The resolution wording had been revised to remove “public property” and replaced with “municipal, State and Federal property.”

Councilor DelBuono moved the following:

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby repeals and replaces the Newington Code of Ordinances Chapter 182, “Blighted Premises”, a copy of said ordinance is attached to the resolution.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Nagel.

Mayor Zartarian said he thought the Town should not have been exempted from the resolution since he felt the Town should be held to the same standard as everyone else. He thought the exemption for State and Federal should be left in.

Councilor Klett said at the time of the original resolution Attorney Ancona was firm in his belief the Town should be exempt along with the previous Town Manager. She was not sure why it was put in and asked if anyone had reviewed the wording with Attorney Ancona. Councilor Anest asked if Councilor Klett knew why it was kept in and she did not but thought there might be property like Roberts Street where if the Town had to remove it, would be very costly.

The Town Manager said the Council would not want to exempt the Town since it would be a burden to Newington. Mayor Zartarian indicated the Town had to step up even though it might be a burden. Councilor DelBuono wondered if it wouldn't be better to discuss the issue with the attorney or leave the wording as is and know that the Town would do its best to address all blight on Town property.

The Town Manager stated at the time this ordinance had been passed the Town owned the National Welding building and was the reason the Town was exempted. Councilor Klett said situations were unpredictable and the Town might not be able to handle certain situations. She felt the Council needed an attorney's opinion.

Councilor Manke moved to table the resolution and was seconded by Councilor Serra. The motion passed 9 – 0.

Mayor Zartarian said an opinion would be requested from the appropriate Town Attorney and would be placed on the next meeting agenda.

C. Ordinance Amendment: Chapter 8, Article VI, Environmental Quality Commission

Councilor Marocchini moved the following:

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby approves the amendments to the Newington Code of Ordinances Chapter 8, Article VI, “Environmental Quality Commission”, a copy of said ordinance is attached to the resolution.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Budrejko and passed 9 – 0.

Councilor Marocchini said this had been a request from the committee which was too big to maintain. Councilor Manke agreed with the Councilor and said it was needed.

Councilor Budrejko said the mission and scope of the committee had changed and with the change would be able to make a bigger impact.

D. Anna Reynolds Renovation Project

- 1. Establish a Building Committee**
- 2. Authorize the Preparation of Plans and Specifications**
- 3. Authorize the Superintendent of Schools to Apply for Grant Funding**

Mr. Jachimowicz gave an overview of the requests and a brief history of past discussions. There was a June 30, 2017, deadline to apply for the grant but did not obligate the Town in any way. They needed to pass the resolutions in order to hire an architect to determine the cost for the project.

Councilor DelBuono was concerned about creating a building committee without knowing what the situation would be for State funding. The Town had the Town Hall renovation project and possibly should hold off and wait for a couple of months.

Dr. Collins indicated it was likely that state funding for these types of projects might dry up in the upcoming years. The project would cost approximately \$14 million and the Town, right now, would get approximately 58% of the money back.

He did not know if that figure was too low or high and hoped to hire an architect to get a real number for the project. The school cannot be fixed since it was too old.

Councilor Klett said the project had been on the list for renovation for ten years and indicated if she was a parent, would not be happy if the Council did not move ahead with the committee since the Library had been added to the Town Hall project and was not on the list for ten years. He indicated it could be delayed to see what the Town and State funding would be. Mr. Jachimowicz said there was a June 30 cutoff date to apply. The Council could pass two of the three resolutions and the third in a couple of months when a better cost estimate was received.

Councilor Manke said it was important to manage the Town's priorities and felt the Town Hall project was a more pressing issue for the Town. Councilor Budrejko asked if all three resolutions had to be passed now and Mr. Jachimowicz explained the first two could be passed but without the third the grant application could not be completed. Councilor Marocchini was concerned another large project along with the Town Hall project might be too big and might not pass at referendum. He was in favor of the project but was not sure it was the right time.

Councilor DelBuono said she was not against the project but thought the item could be tabled for now instead of having a no vote on it since it would be much easier to bring back to the Council if it was tabled. She wanted to have a better idea of the cost and determine what might happen with State funding in the future.

Councilor Klett wanted to pass two of the three resolutions. She did not think the Town Hall project should be compared to the school project. Dr. Collins said it was a timing issue and the Town Council had to be aware funding could be an issue in the future. Councilor Manke said the Town Hall should be completed first. Any price on the school project would increase by the time it was started and felt it should be tabled for now.

Councilor Anest asked if there would be an ADA issue and was told it would be if there was a complaint or an inspection. Councilor Nagel agreed with Councilor Manke that the item should be tabled. He was in favor of the project but thought the Council needed input from the public and had to be aware of the cost.

Dr. Collins understood the position of the Council but it was his obligation to bring the issue to the them since it had been put off for ten years. Councilor DelBuono did not want a no vote on the project and thought if it was tabled they could work on getting a consensus even if not unanimous. Councilor Anest said she thought they owed it to the public to find out what the cost would be since they didn't know if the project was \$10 million or \$26 million.

Councilor Marocchini moved to table all three resolutions and the motion was seconded by Councilor Nagel. The motion passed on 6 – 3 on a roll call vote:

Yes: Councilors Budrejko, DelBuono, Manke, Marocchini, Nagel, Mayor Zartarian

No: Councilors Anest, Klett, Serra

VIII. CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS (Action May Be Taken by Waiving the Rules)
A. Discussion: Disband Committee on Community Safety (Ordinance Amendment)

Mayor Zartarian explained the need for the resolution since it had been inactive for a number of years. Councilor Anest agreed it should be disbanded and Councilor Manke also agreed since they had not met for a long time. At the time it was useful but no longer needed. The item would be placed on the next meeting agenda.

B. Discussion: Alumni Road

Mr. Stanley Sobieski and Dominic Pane gave a presentation on their proposals for changing the configuration of Alumni Road. They had met with various residents to get their input since it was agreed it needed to be fixed. A professional architect would be needed to refine the plan they proposed so it could be presented to the residents. They did not plan on taking any private property. They felt a traffic consultant needed to be hired to determine the best proposal. Their main concern was the intersection of Alumni Road, Maple Hill Avenue and Cedar Street; they did not include in their plan the opening of Alumni Road.

They agreed it was a dangerous intersection and the Town Council should do the right thing by hiring a traffic consultant to work with the Town and residents in the area. Councilor DelBuono said it was an old issue for many of the previous Town Councils. She was pleased it did not take private property. She felt a traffic study needed to be done to look at the feasibility of the project.

Councilor Marocchini stated it had been a long term problem for the Town. He asked if there had been outreach from the four houses affected by the alignment and was told there were a few residents who had concerns about taking private property. Councilor Anest indicated the residents on the east side of Old Farms were not happy with all the traffic. It was explained it was very important to have a traffic consultant develop a plan and then a couple of public hearings could be held to discuss concerns of the residents in the area.

The councilors asked for further information on who designed the drawings they were looking at, if stop signs or traffic lights would be added and if an 8 – 24 would be needed. It was explained the drawing was not to scale and was only a rough draft of what was being proposed. Councilor Marocchini asked what the cost of hiring a consultant would be and was told approximately \$10k and Tanya Lane explained the money was available in the budget.

Councilor Nagel agreed it would help to resolve a safety issue while causing some inconvenience to the four houses affected. They would be getting a quiet cul-de-sac street which might be considered a benefit to them.

Mayor Zartarian indicated the item would be added to the next meeting agenda for further discussion. Councilor Klett thought it was premature to talk about the quality of life regarding the affected residents without having a public hearing. She was concerned about the State view of the project and how it would benefit the State. It was explained the State was aware of the safety issue that needed to be addressed.

IX. RESIGNATIONS/APPOINTMENTS (Action May Be Taken)

A. Development Commission

1. Accept the Resignation of Richard Capuano

Councilor DelBuono moved the following:

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby accepts the resignation of Richard Capuano as a member of the Development Commission, in accordance with a communication dated September 2, 2016.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Manke and the motion passed 9 – 0.

B. Appointments to Boards and Commissions

Councilor Anest moved the following:

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby makes the following appointment(s):

John Wallace Middle School Wing Improvements Project Building Committee

Name	Address	Party	Term	Replaces
BOE Rep: Cindy Stamm	35 Judge Lane	D	BOE TERM	N/A

The motion was seconded by Councilor Serra and the motion passed 9 – 0.

X. TAX REFUNDS (Action Requested)

Councilor Nagel moved the following:

RESOLVED:

That property tax refunds in the amount of \$7,034.58 are hereby approved in the individual amounts and for those named on the “Requests for Refund of an Overpayment of Taxes,” certified by the Revenue Collector, a list of which is attached to this resolution.

The motion was seconded by Councilor DelBuono and passed 9 – 0.

XI. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS (Action Requested)

A. Public Hearing, September 13, 2016

B. Regular Meeting, September 13, 2016

Councilor Nagel moved to accept the above minutes and the motion was seconded by Councilor Budrejko. The motion passed 8 – 0 (Abstained: Councilor Klett).

XII. WRITTEN/ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER, OTHER TOWN AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS, OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS AND THE PUBLIC

None

XIII. COUNCIL LIAISON/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Nagel indicated the Senior Center had passed their bylaws and rules recently. The Town Hall Renovation Committee had suggested two proposals for the new building 1) right size 2) renovate as is and hoped some realistic prices would be received shortly.

XIV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – IN GENERAL

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive: She was in agreement with the disbanding of the Community Safety Committee but wanted to know how the public could communicate with the Police Community Council. She thought a general email address could be set up and used by residents. She asked for an update from the Town Engineer regarding the south branch of the Park River flood control and who and how it would be maintained.

She had thought the Council was going to put together a list of town priorities to include the large projects that needed to be done. The BOE had the school project on the table for many years and during that time had not heard anything about the Library or Churchill Park renovations.

Chris Bieszczad, 53 Maple Hill Avenue: He said the school project was not new. Regarding Alumni Road he indicated there had not been outreach to the residents on Maple Hill and heard about the project by reading the meeting minutes. He stated planting arborvitaes would not diminish the noise of the traffic and they needed further input from the residents.

John Bachand, 56 Maple Hill Avenue: With regard to Alumni Road, he stated the plan had been developed initially by the best and the brightest engineers in the State. The island was developed and sub-divided by one person. He said not everyone would be happy with whatever was decided. He hoped they would open Alumni Road at Willard since he felt it would improve traffic flow. He said the school project might derail the Town Hall project but did not know which of the two was more important.

Michael J. Fox, 1901 Main Street: He wanted to remind everyone that the town wide litter pickup would be held at 9 a.m. Saturday leaving from the municipal parking lot. He hoped both the Town Manager and the Mayor would be there to speak.

(inaudible), 170 Old Farm Drive: He would be affected by the realignment of Alumni Road but said that most of the accidents happen before Alumni and it usually is a quiet street. He stated the State wanted to open Alumni Road and that had not been mentioned at all.

Dominic Pane, 638 Church Street: He wanted everyone to know that letters had been sent to over 300 people in the area regarding the realignment and if the Council wanted to, could use the same list to urge people to attend public hearings.

XV. REMARKS BY COUNCILORS

Councilor Budrejko said there was a drought in Connecticut and urged residents to voluntarily restrict their usage before it became mandatory. The Mayor indicated at a recent MDC meeting the topic had been brought up but that the water level was currently above 70% and if it went below that figure, red flags would be raised.

Councilor Klett asked the Town Manager about the process to move Alumni Road development forward and was told it would have to be approved by the Council to approve funding for the consultant. The Councilor wanted to ensure the public had an opportunity to give their input.

Councilor DelBuono said that it was not usual procedure to notify the public of a study but once the Council received information could hold public hearings. Councilor Klett felt it was important to get the residents' concerns prior to the study.

XVI. EXECUTIVE SESSION RE: CONTRACTS

Councilor Manke moved to adjourn to executive session at 9:21 p.m. and was seconded by Councilor Marocchini. The motion passed 9 – 0.

Councilor Nagel moved to adjourn to executive session at 10:17 p.m. and was seconded by Councilor Marocchini. The motion passed 9 – 0.

XVII. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Marocchini moved to adjourn to executive session at 10:17 p.m. and was seconded by Councilor Anest. The motion passed 9 – 0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Irish-Simpson
Clerk of the Council

Cc: J. Krupinski, Town Clerk